

REMARKS:

This paper is herewith filed in response to the Examiner's final Office Action mailed on July 31, 2009 for the above-captioned U.S. Patent Application. This office action is a final rejection of claims 1-3, 6-7, 10-12, and 15-23 of the application.

More specifically, the Examiner has rejected claims 1-3, 6-7, 10-12, and 15-23 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Venolia (US6573844) in view of Comerford (US5963671) in further view of Shimada (US7136047). The Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

The Applicant notes that independent claims 1, 6, and 11 have been amended to recite features of dependent claims 15, 18, and 21, respectively. Claims 15, 18, and 21 have been cancelled. Support for the amendments can be found at least in paragraph [0028] and [0034] of the published application. No new matter is added.

The Applicants submit that for at least the reason that independent claims 1, 6, and 11 have been amended to recite features of dependent claims 15, 18, and 21, respectively, the Examiner is not seen to be required to perform an additional search. These amendments should thus be entered at least for the purposes of Appeal.

Firstly, although the Applicant does not expressly or impliedly agree with the rejection of claim 1, the Applicant submits that claim 1 has been amended to recite features of dependent claim 15 so as to further prosecution of claim 1 to an allowance.

Regarding the rejection of 15 the Applicant notes that the Examiner states:

Venolia, Comerford and Shimada all teach a version of making input units that are likely to be picked larger or input elements that correspond to a group larger than normally displayed on a screen. While the references are silent on decreasing elements that do not fall within one of the categories mentioned above, they all provide insight into the main feature, which is to allow for ease and quickness of selection," (emphasis added)

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The Applicant agrees with the Examiners that the references cited are silent on the related feature of decreasing in size input elements not included in the group of input elements increased in size by an equal amount, as in amended claim 1.

However, the Applicant disagrees with at least the Examiner's statement that:

“It would have therefore been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to have incorporated decreasing of the elements not of interest to increase the user awareness by emphasizing wanted elements but not totally eliminating the option for the user to select other input units.”

The Applicant submits that there can not be found anything in the references to support the Examiners assertion, as indicated above, that one of ordinary skill could somehow find as obvious, what has been admitted as silent in the references, an inventive step of decreasing in size any input elements not included in the group of input elements increased in size by an equal amount.

The Applicant submits that, as similarly stated in the rejection, no where in Venolia can there be found any disclosure or suggestion of decreasing in size input elements not included in the group of input elements increased in size by an equal amount. Further, the Applicant notes that immediately following the cited text in Venolia it is disclosed that the other keys are not entirely obscured, just in case the prediction is incorrect (col. 6, lines 51-52). Thus, although Venolia may display a key as larger in size on the soft keyboard, Venolia makes a similar point that the other keys not be obscured in some manner. That Applicant contends that if Venolia were to decrease in size these other keys by an equal amount this would further obscure the other keys which is taught away from by Venolia. The Applicant submits that for at least this reason one of ordinary skill in the art would not be motivated or somehow find it obvious to decrease a size of these other keys in Venolia.

The method in Comerford relates to emphasizing certain characters of similarly displayed characters on a soft keyboard in ways so as to bring them to the foreground so that they may be quickly found (col. 3, lines 9-18). According to Comerford as cited, in a case

where it is highly unlikely that certain characters would be selected next then the emphasis placed on these characters can be removed and placed on different characters (col. 3, lines 61-63). The Applicant submits that it can be seen that the method of Comerford is directed at emphasizing certain ones of similarly displayed characters to bring them to the foregrounds and then removing the emphasis of these characters afterwards. Thus, the Applicant submits that the approach of Comerford is directed at emphasizing particular characters and not de-emphasizing them (e.g., decreasing in size). The Applicant submits that there can not be found anything in Comerford to make obvious an additional step in Comerford of decreasing in size input elements not included in the group of input elements increased in size by an equal amount.

Further, the Applicant notes that Shimada relates to displaying a relevant group of characters in a separate candidate display area such that a user can select the desired character in a candidate area (col. 2, lines 56-60). In Shimada any other characters are not seen to be part of the group. Thus, for at least this reason a person of ordinary skill in the art would not be motivated to decrease in size input elements not included in the group of input elements increased in size by an equal amount.

The Applicants contend that, for at least these reasons already stated, a person of ordinary skill in the art would not find obvious in any of the references cited at least where claim 1 relates to decreasing in size input elements not included in the group of input elements increased in size by an equal amount.

Further, the Applicants submit that, for at least the reasons already stated, even if the references were combined, which is not agreed to as proper, the proposed combination would still fail to disclose or suggest claim 1. Thus, the rejection of claim 1 should be removed.

The Applicant respectfully requests that, for at least the reasons stated, the Examiner enter the amendments and remove the rejection of claim 1 in this Response to final Office Action.

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In addition, regarding the Response to Arguments section of the Office Action the Applicant disagrees with the Examiner.

The Applicant submit that although it appears that the Examiner cites Comerford as allegedly disclosing or suggesting an input entry in a first mode and Shimada as allegedly disclosing or suggesting an input entry is in a second mode, the Examiner has not addressed at least the Applicant's argument that none of the references cited can be seen to disclose or suggest automatically determining from the identity of a separate information unit corresponding to a first character in a composition activity whether an input entry is in a first mode or second mode, as in claim 1.

The Applicant notes that the Examiner admits that Venolia does not explicitly teach determining modes or wherein the separate information unit corresponds to a first character entered in a composition activity (page 3 of the Office Action). It is noted that the Examiner applies Shimada to overcome this admitted shortfall (pages 3-4 of the Office Action). The Applicant disagrees.

The Applicant submits that Shimada as cited merely relates to a user pushing an appropriate group symbol in order to display a relevant group of characters in a candidate area from which the user can select a desired character (col. 2, lines 56-60). The Applicant submits that pushing an appropriate group symbol in order to display a relevant group of characters in a candidate area can not be seen to relate to modes defining how the characters may be emphasized.

Further, it is noted that Shimada discloses a numerical mode where "it is typically not required that any candidates be displayed after pushing an input key, since each input key will typically only be associated with one number," (emphasis added), (col. 8, lines 51-54) and "character entry mode (i.e. an input area is displayed and a candidate area may or may not yet be displayed and if displayed may or may not yet have entries within it)," (emphasis added), (col. 9, lines 6-9). Thus, according to Shimada this numerical mode and character entry mode does not appear to always result in a display of characters in the

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candidate area, as applied in the rejection. Further, there can not be found in Shimada where these modes relate to particular emphasizing of a next input element.

The Applicant submits that, for at least these reasons, even if such a combination were made, which is not agreed to as proper, the proposed combination would still fail to disclose or suggest claim 1.

In addition, for at least the reason that independent claims 6 and 11 recite similar features of claim 1, as stated above, the rejection of these claims is improper and the rejections should be removed.

Furthermore, for at least the reason that claims 2-3 and 15, and claims 7 and 10, and claims 12 and 22-23 depend from claims 1, 6, and 11, respectively, the references cited can not be seen to disclose or suggest these claims and the rejections of these claims should be removed.

Based on the above explanations and arguments, it is clear that the references cited cannot be seen to disclose or suggest claims 1-3, 6-7, 10-12, 16-17, 19-20, and 22-23. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and remove the rejections of claims 1-3, 6-7, 10-12, 16-17, 19-20, and 22-23, and to allow all of the pending claims 1-3, 6-7, 10-12, 16-17, 19-20, and 22-23 as now presented for examination.

For all of the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now present in the application are clearly novel and patentable over the prior art of record. Should any unresolved issue remain, the Examiner is invited to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted:

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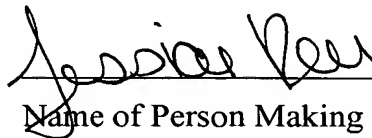
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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. BOX 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

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